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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY

Poland

REPORT NO.

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SUBJECT

Political Indoctrination at the Medical Academy in Szczecin

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REQUIREMENT NO.

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REFERENCES

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PLACE ACQUIRED

1. In addition to the normal subjects, all students of the Medical Academy in Szczecin (Stettin) are compelled to attend the Studium Wojskowe (Military Studies) and also political lectures. These lectures are organized by the ZMP (Union of Polish Youth) and the Basic Party Organization (POP). They are given three times a week and last 1½ hours each. They cover, in addition to instruction on the development of political conditions in the world from the communist point of view, political economy, Marxist dialectics, and the history of workers' movements.
2. At the end of each academic year students must pass an examination in the Studium Wojskowe, which is regarded as the most vital and important examination during the whole course of their studies. Failure to pass this examination means the loss of a whole year of study, no matter how excellent the progress made by individual student in their professional subjects. Great stress is laid on attendance at political lectures and it is very difficult to present acceptable excuses for absenteeism.
3. Irrespective of political training described above, both the ZMP and the POP carry on their ideological training outside the normal school curriculum.
4. The attitude of the lecturers toward political training is that of indifference and it is regarded by them as a necessary evil.
5. The attitude of the students varies according to their class origin. Middle-class students are indifferent to it but they attend the lectures because this is a necessary condition for the completion of their studies. Students of working-class origin show some measure of interest in political lectures, believing that the working class is now better off in Poland than before. It can be said generally that the attitude of students to the present political conditions in Poland is indifferent and more hostile than otherwise; the proportion of those in favor of it is very small indeed.

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6. During lectures the lecturers must always make a reference to the achievements of Soviet learning. Even if some achievement is known to have been made in the West it is not mentioned, and if the event happens to be too important to pass over in silence, it must be said that the given discovery or achievement had in fact been made earlier in Russia, but that of course the West in its propaganda was claiming it as its own. In private conversation with students the lecturers never refer to political matters, as it is a public secret that a large number of the students are in the service of the UB (Security Police) and of the Party. But in private conversation on scientific subjects the lecturers do not stress so frequently the Soviet discoveries and achievements.
7. Officially students are not forbidden to practice their religion. In reality, however, much is done to make it difficult. For instance, in the spring of 1953 a senior Church dignitary arrived in Szczecin and was to preach a special sermon for the students. The authorities of all academic schools in Szczecin organized on that day practical training exercises of the Studium Wojskowe, i.e. drill in marching, which went on till late in the evening. Several students of the Medical Academy did not take part in these exercises and attended the sermon. Among them were an assistant in the chemistry department and another in the physiological chemistry department who were deprived of their posts, which is a serious blow to the student because of the extra salary attached to the posts.
8. The attitude of the lecturers to students is indifferent and the lecturers are very reserved in their dealings with students for fear of provocation.

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